Decline in Cultivation

943. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the total area under cultivation is coming down in the country;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether repeal of ULCRA will encourage construction on agricultural land; and

(d) whether any study has been done in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) and (b) The total cultivated area (net sown area + current fallows) in the country has, more or less, remained constant at around 156 million hectares.

(c) The land which is mainly used for agricultural purposes was not deemed to be urban land and did not come under purview of the Act vide Section 2(o) and Explanation (c) under Section 2(o) of the Urban Land (Ceiling & Regulation) Act, 1976. The repeal of the Act is not, therefore, likely to have any implication on agricultural land.

(d) No study was conducted.

Efforts to Increase Food Production

944. DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD:
SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH:
SHRI S. RAMACHANDRA REDDY:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

whether Government have taken steps for increasing food production and gearing up the financial sector for more funds for agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): Department of Agriculture and Co-operation is implementing a number of crop oriented production programmes covering rice, wheat, coarse cereals, sugarcane, oilseeds, pulses and cotton. For gearing up the financial sector for more funds for agricultural sector, Kisan Credit Card Scheme has been launched by all public sector banks besides introduction of at least one specialised agricultural bank in each state to cater to the needs of high tech agriculture.

Assistance to U.P. and Bihar from National Calamity Fund

945. SHRI JANARADAN YADAV: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether all reports have been received from Government of Bihar and U.P. for grant of assistance from the National Calamity Fund and the fund for natural calamity;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the details of the information which is awaited;

(d) the details of the funds released so far and dates on which they have been released; and

(e) whether any of the funds in term of amount and dates received by State go beyond the parameters set by the Finance Commission?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) to (d) During 1998-99, the Government of Bihar had requested for assistance of Rs. 1003.75 crore from the National Fund for Calamity Relief (NFCR) in the wake of floods, and the Government of Uttar Pradesh had requested for assistance of Rs. 2139.49 crore from the NFCR in the wake of floods/landlides. The requestes are at various stages of process in accordance with the established procedure for assistance from the NFCR.

Government of Uttar Pradesh had also requested for assistance of Rs. 114.81 crore from the NFCR in the wake of